

After serving twenty years in the U.S. Air Force, where he earned the Air Force Commendation Medal and the Humanitarian Service Medal, Mr. Wilkerson began working for the National Park Service in 1994 as a branch chief for contracting, property, and financial management at the Natchez Trace Parkway.

In 2010, Mr. Wilkerson was temporarily assigned to the NPS Southeast Regional Office in Atlanta to serve as the acting regional comptroller. In that role he directed the annual fiscal year closing process for more than sixty park units in the region, with the execution of obligations totaling more than \$245 million.

From August 2012 through December 2013, he served as the Acting Superintendent of the Natchez Trace Parkway, Tupelo National Battlefield, Brices Cross Roads National Battlefield Site, and the Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail, where he was responsible for leading and managing the eighth most visited NPS unit in the country.

In 2015, Mr. Wilkerson was appointed as the Superintendent of the Shiloh National Military Park. Over the last four years, he has performed a remarkable job of managing and overseeing all aspects of the Shiloh National Military Park.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Mr. Wilkerson on his retirement from the National Park Service as Superintendent of Shiloh National Battlefield and his forty-six years of service in our nation's military and in the National Park Service.

ANTI-CORRUPTION DAY

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 9, 2019

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, today is International Anti-Corruption Day, recognizing the need for governments and civil societies around the world to be vigilant in the fight against bribes and abuse of power for personal gain.

According to the United Nations, every year \$1 trillion is paid in bribes while an estimated \$2.6 trillion are stolen through corruption, more than five percent of global GDP.

No more is this on clearer display today than across the Middle East, which is witnessing a revival of the 2011 Arab Spring protests in places like Lebanon, Iraq, Iran and in towns and cities across Syria. Peaceful protesters are demanding an end to abusive policies and practices by government officials who seek little else than their own profit—always at the expense of the peoples' fundamental rights. The persistence of protestors today despite increasingly violent government responses indicates a point of no return. The brazen willingness to sacrifice their lives signals just how precarious these citizens' lives have become under their governments.

Syria is ground zero for what happens when corrupt governments refuse reform and respond to peaceful demands with violence. The Assad regime continues to leech Syrians of their basic human rights, uprooting their lives, indiscriminately bombing his own people, and deliberately starving them while blaming the United States and other Western states for the dismal conditions of his country and the Syrian

people. And all for the sake of protecting the power and interests of corrupt officials who are part of the Assad network, including Fahd Darwish, Samer Al-Debbes, Samir Anis Hassan, Samer Awees, Kanaan Kanaan, Tamim Badr, Mahrar Khonda, Osama Ali Zayoud, Iyad Habib Baytjaneh, Tarif Akhras, and Fares Shehabi, among others. The United States must target these individuals for exposure and sanctions for their corruption and theft from the Syrian people.

And in response to these widespread cries for change, the United States must continue to pursue a relentless campaign against corruption everywhere. Without such accountability, perpetrators within and partners of corrupt governments will boldly continue, extending the suffering of innocent civilians around the world. If the United States does not demonstrate its commitment with action, nefarious actors and businessmen around the world will feel emboldened to engage in corrupt practices. On International Anti-Corruption Day, we must stand with those calling out for change.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM EMMER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 9, 2019

Mr. EMMER. Madam Speaker, on December 6th, I was unable to cast my vote on two pieces of legislation. If present, I would have voted NAY on H. Res. 326 (RC No. 652), YEA on the Motion to Recommit H.R. 4 (RC No. 653), and NAY on passage of H.R. 4 (RC No. 654).

KAZAKHSTAN FOREIGN MINISTER'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON

HON. STEVE CHABOT

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 9, 2019

Mr. CHABOT. Madam Speaker, as co-chair of the U.S.-Kazakhstan Congressional Caucus, I am pleased to rise today to welcome Kazakhstan's newly-appointed Foreign Minister, Mukhtar Tileuberdi, to the U.S. Capitol during his inaugural visit to Washington, D.C. this week. Minister Tileuberdi is an experienced Kazakh diplomat and statesman.

Throughout his career, he was posted in Kazakhstan's diplomatic missions in South Korea, Israel, and served as Ambassador to Malaysia with concurrent accreditation to Indonesia, Brunei Darussalam, and the Philippines. He also served as Ambassador of Kazakhstan to the Swiss Confederation and with concurrent accreditation to the Principality of Liechtenstein and the Vatican. Additionally, he served as the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva. I look forward to working with the Minister in his new role, as we continue to grow the important bilateral relationship between Kazakhstan and the United States.

Madam Speaker, as you may know, the United States and Kazakhstan held first meeting of the U.S.-Kazakhstan Enhanced Strategic Partnership Dialogue in January 2018,

following former President Nazarbayev's visit to Washington. The most recent series of these bilateral talks took place last week and focused heavily on continued cooperation on issues of aviation, counterterrorism, and information sharing, among other topics.

Along with my fellow co-chair of the U.S.-Kazakhstan Caucus, we look forward to our meeting with Minister Tileuberdi to discuss how the United States and Kazakhstan can continue to promote security and stability across Central Asia through Kazakhstan's strong support for nuclear non-proliferation as well the U.S.-Kazakhstan Enhanced Strategic Partnership Dialogue, military cooperation, and C5+1 multilateral meetings.

Cooperation between the United States and Kazakhstan has never been stronger. Kazakhstan has been a strategic partner in Afghanistan and in the fight against violent extremism, and has been a leader in repatriating foreign fighters and their families from Syria and Iraq. On behalf of my fellow U.S.-Kazakhstan Caucus members, we welcome the opportunity to deepen the bilateral partnership, and we look forward to hosting future presidential and high-level delegation visits on Capitol Hill.

HONORING THE REV. DR. JACQUELINE A. THOMPSON

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 9, 2019

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Rev. Dr. Jacqueline A. Thompson in celebration of her installation as the Senior Pastor of the Allen Temple Baptist Church in Oakland, California.

Rev. Thompson was raised by a mother who believed in the importance of church. In her own words at the age of 12, Dr. Thompson realized that church was "not to be just about singing and having a good time in the Lord. But rather there was a purpose and a mandate with a measurable objective".

After graduating from College with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in 1993, Dr. Thompson began teaching history and politics. While teaching allowed her to positively impact lives in her community and while she loved teaching, she felt called to impact lives in a different way.

In 1995, Dr. Thompson followed her calling and returned to her church family and was licensed to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. She was later ordained in 1998 by the Reverend Dr. J. Alfred Smith, Sr. at Allen Temple Baptist Church.

Later she attended Howard University School of Divinity where she excelled in academic scholarship, preaching and ministry. As a result, she received several awards including The Who's Who Among Students in American Colleges and Universities, The Ford Foundation Fellowship, and The Nannie Helen Burroughs Award.

During her time at Howard University, she served as the Minister of Youth at the Shiloh Baptist Church of Washington, D.C. Her love for teaching and affinity with youth allowed the young people in the Ministry to flourish under her leadership.

Dr. Thompson graduated from Howard University in 1998 earning a Master of Divinity Degree with honors.